# Euthydemus

## or On Eristics[1]

**Dramatis Personae**

Crito, Socrates

Crito Who was it, Socrates, with whom you were conversing[2] yesterday in the Lyceum?[3] Indeed, a great crowd had surrounded you, so that I couldn't hear anything clearly when I came up wishing to listen. However, when I peeped over and caught a glimpse, it seemed to me to be some stranger[4] you were conversing with. Who was it? 271a

1 The subtitle *On Eristics*, as well as the genre *anatreptic*, may have been added by later editors rather than written by Plato. Eristics is the art or wisdom that Socrates claims that the sophists in this dialogue possess and that he himself would like to learn from them (see 272c). It might be translated as "disputation" or "contention," and is derived from the word for strife, *eris*. Anatreptic might be translated as "refutative," and literally refers to what "turns over" or "overturns." The *Euthydemus* implicitly contrasts the sophists "refuting" or "overturning" (*anatrepein*) whatever their interlocutors say, with Socrates' exhorting or turning (*protrepein*) his interlocutors to philosophy (cf. 278b and 286c with 274e and 278c-d ). We shall leave eristics untranslated, and translate the verb *anatrepein* as "overturn," and *protrepein* as "turn toward" throughout.

2 *Dialegesthai:* to converse, to discuss. In its active form (*dialegein*), it means to pick out, or separate. It is the word from which we derive dialectics. See note on *logos*, at 271b.

3 The Lyceum is a gymnasium outside of Athens that Socrates frequented for the purpose of exercise and conversation (*Euthyphro* 2a, *Symposium* 223d, and *Lysis* 203a).

4 *Xenos*: foreigner or stranger. From time to time in the dialogue, the sophists are addressed as "foreigners" or "strangers" with the implication that they are alien to Athenian life, whether represented by Ctesippus, Crito, or even Socrates himself.

Socrates Which one are you asking about, Crito? Not one but two were there.[5]

Crito The one I am speaking of was seated second from your
b right. And in the middle of you was Axiochos' lad, who seemed to me to have grown a great deal, Socrates, and not to differ much in age from our Critoboulos. But Critoboulos is slight, and the other one is well-developed, beautiful, and good to look at.[6]

Socrates It's Euthydemus, Crito, you're asking about, and the one who was sitting on my left was his brother, Dionysodorus. He also shares in the speeches.[7]

Crito I'm not acquainted with either, Socrates.[8] They are
c some novel sophists, as it seems. Where are they from? And what is their wisdom?

Socrates Their family, I believe, is from somewhere around here, around Chios, but they emigrated to Thurii. Then,

5 In this sentence, and frequently in this dialogue, Socrates uses the dual form of the verb, which refers to a pair, rather than either to the singular or the plural. We shall indicate the dual when possible with "two" or "both."

6 *Kalos kai agathos*: beautiful and good. The Greek word *kalos* has a wide variety of meanings, comprising the beautiful, noble, fine, and splendid. Because beautiful tends to capture this same range of meanings in English, we shall ordinarily translate *kalos* as beautiful, but also occasionally as noble when this seems to better capture the sense of the Greek. For an excellent defense of translating *kalos* as beautiful, see Joe Sach's introduction to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2002). We shall translate *agathos* as good wherever it appears. It is interesting that all of the positive adjectives used by Crito in this instance refer to how the boy looks. When the two adjectives are used together as a single expression in a compressed form in Greek (*kalok'agathos*, or *kalos k'agathos*) the expression can be translated as "gentleman" and has aristocratic overtones.

7 *Logos*: speech, statement, word, argument, account, reason. *Logos* is derived from the common verb *legein*, which means to speak or to say. We have translated *logos* whenever possible as speech or argument, except in the phrase "worth speaking of" (*axios logou*), literally, "worth a speech," as at 279c.

8 Here Crito uses the Greek *gignōskein*, to know or recognize. There are other verbs of knowing that are used almost interchangeably throughout this dialogue, *epistasthai* and *eidenai*. *Gignōskein* differs from *epistamasthai* in the way that the French *connaître* differs from *savoir* or the German *kennen* from *wissen*. Additionally, *eidenai*, the perfect form of the verb to see, is also used to mean "know." Whenever English permits, we translate *gignōskein* as "recognize," and *eidenai* and *epistasthai* as "know." We do reserve the English "knowledge" for the Greek noun *epistēmē* which is related to *epistamasthai*.

having gone into exile[9] from there, they have spent many years now in these parts. And what you're asking about, their wisdom, it's amazing, Crito.[10] The two of them are simply all-wise;[11] I hadn't known before this what pancratiasts were.[12] For they are absolutely prepared for every fight, not like the two brother pancratiasts born in Acarnania. For *those* two fight[13] only with the body, d
but *these* two are first of all most formidable[14] with respect to the body (and in fighting, they are stronger than everyone), for they are altogether wise with respect to both fighting in armor and in making another so, if he pays. Second, in courtroom fights, they are strongest 272a
both in competing and in teaching others to speak and to compose the types of speeches used in courtrooms.

Before, they were formidable only in these things, but now they've brought the pancratiastic art to perfection.[15] For the only fight they hadn't undertaken, they have now worked out, so that there's not even one person able to rise up against them. Thus they have become formidable both in fighting with speeches and

9 *Pheugein*: to flee, to run away, to be exiled or banished, or to be in exile.

10 *Thaumasios*: amazing or wonderful. In the *Theaetetus*, Socrates claims that "to wonder [or to be amazed]" is "the beginning of philosophy" (155c-d).

11 *Passophos*: all-wise or skilled. The Greek *sophos* has a range of meanings, including wise, skilled, clever, learned, and prudent. It can be used sarcastically, as in our phrase "wise" guy (see *Apology* 18b), or refer to the possession of the highest human excellence (*Apology* 21a). Although Socrates means here that the sophists are skilled in certain ways, his use of *passophos* raises the question that plagues the dialogue: what is wisdom (*sophia*), and do the sophists (literally, wise ones) possess it? So too *sophia*, used above by Crito, means wisdom, skill, expertise, sound judgment, etc. Philosophy (*philosophia*) thus means, literally, love of or friend to wisdom.

12 The *pankration* was a complete contest, combining both wrestling and boxing.

13 *Machesthai*: to wage battle, to fight. Socrates uses this verb or its noun, *machē*, both of which are used frequently in accounts of war, quite often in his initial description of the sophists.

14 *Deinos*: formidable, fearful, terrible, and (sometimes) clever. *Deinos legein*, terrible or clever (i.e., formidable) in speaking, was an expression used to describe—and criticize—those who beat others in arguments regardless of justice or right, those able to "make the weaker argument [i.e., the unjust argument] the stronger" (see *Apology* 17a).

15 *Telos*: completion, perfection, end or goal.

in refuting whatever is said, regardless of whether it's
b false or true. Therefore I have it in mind, Crito, to hand myself over[16] to these two men.[17] For they also claim they can make any other person whatever formidable in these same things in a short time.

Crito What, Socrates? Aren't you afraid at your age that you're already too old?[18]

Socrates Least of all, Crito. I have sufficient evidence and encouragement not to be afraid. For these two themselves were old, so to speak, when they began with this very wisdom which I desire, the eristic one. A year or two
c ago they weren't yet wise. But I fear one thing alone—that I will bring reproach to the two foreigners, just as I did to Connus, the son of Metrobios, the citharist, who still, even now, teaches me to play the cithara.[19] When the children who are my schoolmates see me, they mock me and call Connus a geriatric teacher. So I am afraid that someone might also reproach these two foreigners too in this way. And perhaps fearing this very thing, they might not be willing to accept me. But, Crito, just as I have persuaded some of the elderly to accompany me as fellow students in that case, so I'll try to persuade
d others in this one. Why don't you come along? And

16 *Paradidonai*: to hand over, to turn over, to surrender (in a military sense), to transmit. Here Socrates is "surrendering" himself to the sophists. The verb is soon used (at 273d) to refer to the sophists' "handing over" or "transmitting" virtue, and later (290b ff.) to refer to the craftsmen's handing what they acquire but do not know how to use over to those who do know how.

17 *Anēr*: man, as distinct from woman, and from human being (*anthrōpos*).

18 There are clear indications that this dialogue will draw upon or parody Aristophanes' *Clouds*. In the prologue of this play, the protagonist Strepsiades decides to become a student of Socrates despite the fact that he is old (126 and ff.). Here, Socrates decides to become a student of Dionysodorus and Euthydemus despite being so old. So too Socrates has it in mind to "surrender" himself to these sophists in the same way that the Chorus of Clouds commands Strepsiades to "surrender" himself to Socrates in the *Clouds* (435). The two brothers—inasmuch as the one covers the same ground as the other, but moves the argument in the opposite direction—resemble the strophe and antistrophe (literally, "a turning back") of the chorus in a comedy. References to Aristophanes generally and to the *Clouds* specifically abound in this dialogue.

19 The cithara was an ancient stringed instrument. Connus is mentioned in *Menexenus* as a teacher of Socrates (235e9-236a1).

we'll bring your sons as bait for them. For if we bring them, I know that they'll educate us too.

**Crito** Nothing prevents it, Socrates, if, at any rate, it seems best to you. But first, describe fully what the wisdom of these two men is, so that I may see what in fact we'll learn.

**Socrates** You'll hear at once, for I can't say that I wasn't attentive to the two of them; rather, I paid attention and I remember a lot. I'll try to describe fully everything to you from the beginning. By some god, I happened to be sitting there, where, in fact, you saw me, alone in the e
dressing room, and I already had it in my mind to get up to leave. But when I stood up to go, my customary sign, the *daimonion*, came.[20] So I sat down again, and a little later those two came in—Euthydemus and 273a
Dionysodorus, and other students—many, it seemed to me—came at the same time. The two entered and walked around in the cloister. The two of them hadn't yet taken two or three turns when Cleinias came in, the one who you, speaking truly, assert has grown a lot. And behind him were a great many of his lovers, including Ctesippus among others, a youth from Paeania, very much a gentleman by nature,[21] except

20 A *daimonion* is literally "something related to *daimons*," who were understood as divine or semi-divine beings, and offspring of divinities (see *Apology* 27d-28a). On a number of occasions in the Platonic corpus Socrates refers to his *daimonion*, a voice or sign that comes to him frequently throughout his life and that acts as a guide. In the *Apology*, for example, Socrates explains the *daimonion* as a voice that warns him against what he is about to do or to say (as he also describes it to Crito here in the *Euthydemus*), and that it has kept him out of politics, where a good man would surely perish (*Apology* 31c4-32a3; see also *Apology* 40a-40c; *Theages* 128d1-131a10; *Phaedrus* 242b8-242c9; and *Republic* 496a11-496e2; and Xenophon, *Memorabilia* I.1.2-9 and *Apology* 10-14). It is only in the *Euthydemus*, however, that the *daimonion*'s hindrance of Socrates accounts for the entire dialogue that follows, one that leaves him exposed to the sophists and the ill political repute that Crito believes will attach to him from such an association. And of course, when Socrates announces that he has such a *daimonion* he only fuels the charge against him that he believes not in the gods of the city but in other *daimonic* things (see *Apology* 31c-d; and *Euthyphro* 3b5 ff.).

21 Compare Socrates' remark about Ctesippus (beautiful and good with respect to nature) with Crito's about Cleinias at 271b5 (beautiful and good with respect to sight). See note at 271b.

b for a measure of hubris due to his being young. When Cleinias saw me from the doorway sitting alone, he came over straightaway and sat on my right, just as you say. Dionysodorus and Euthydemus saw him, but stood apart at first, conversing with one another, glancing at us from time to time, for I paid close attention to both of them. Then he, Euthydemus, went and sat next to the lad, and the other sat on my left, and the others wherever they chanced to sit.

c So I welcomed them kindly, since I hadn't seen them in a long time. Then I spoke to Cleinias: "Cleinias, these two here, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, are wise men, not in small things, but in great ones. For they know everything about war, whatever is necessary for anyone who would be a good general, concerning battle lines and command of encampments and what must be taught for fighting in armor. And they can also enable another to help himself in courtrooms, should someone do him injustice."

d When I said these things, they looked down on me. Looking at each other, they both laughed, and Euthydemus said, "We no longer take these things seriously, Socrates, but we treat them as a side job."

And being amazed, I said, "Surely your work must be beautiful, if such great matters happen to be your side job; and, by the gods, tell me, you two, what this beautiful thing is."

"Virtue, Socrates," he said, "and we think that of all human beings we can transmit it most beautifully and quickly."

e "Zeus!" I said, "What a matter you both speak of! Where have you two discovered this godsend?[22] I was still thinking, as I was just now saying, that you two were very formidable in fighting in armor, and I was saying this about you. For when you visited here the first time, I remember you two professing this. And now, if you truly have this knowledge, be propitious, for

22 *Hermaion*: a godsend, a stroke of luck, or, literally, a gift from the god Hermes. Socrates uses the word at 295a as well.

I address you simply as if you were gods, begging your pardon for what I said before. But, Euthydemus and 274a
Dionysodorus, see if you're speaking truths. Due to the magnitude of what you profess, it's not at all amazing to distrust it."

"But know well, Socrates," they said, "that it is so."

"In that case, I consider you blessed on account of this possession, much more so than I do the great King [of Persia] on account of his empire. But tell me this much, whether you two have it in mind to make an exhibition of this wisdom, or how have you two deliberated?"

"It's for this very thing that we are present, Socrates, to make an exhibition and to teach, if anyone is willing b
to learn."

"But I pledge to you that all those who don't have [this wisdom] will be willing, first me, and then Cleinias here, and in addition to us Ctesippus there and these others," I said, pointing out to him Cleinias' lovers, who now happened to be standing around us. Now Ctesippus happened to be sitting far from Cleinias—and it seemed to me that when Euthydemus was conversing with me [Euthydemus] happened to lean forward, and obscured c
Ctesippus' sight of Cleinias, who sat between us. Wanting to behold his beloved and, at the same time, being a lover of listening, Ctesippus jumped forward first and placed himself right in front of us. When the others saw him they also came around us—both Cleinias' lovers and the comrades of Euthydemus and Dionysodorus. Pointing to them, I told Euthydemus that all were ready to learn. Then Ctesippus and the d
others agreed very eagerly, and everyone in common bid the two of them to make an exhibition of the power of their wisdom.

Then, I said, "Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, gratify these people entirely and in every way, and make an exhibition for my sake. With respect to these great things, it's clear that to make an exhibition is no slight work. But, tell me *this*, whether you would be able to make only that man good who has already been persuaded that he should learn from you, or also the

e one who has not yet been persuaded because he does not entirely believe either that this matter, virtue, is teachable or that you two are its teachers? Come on, is it the work of this same art—to persuade both that virtue is teachable and that you two are the ones from whom someone could learn it most beautifully—or is it the work of another one?"

"It's of the very same one, Socrates," Dionysodorus said.

"Then you two, Dionysodorus," I said, "of all present-day human beings can most beautifully turn
275a [others] toward philosophy and to care for virtue?"

"We believe so, Socrates."

"Well then," I said, "put off your exhibition of the rest for another time, but exhibit this very thing. Persuade this youth here that it's necessary to philosophize and to care for virtue, and you will gratify me and all these here. For something like this has come about for this lad. Both I and all these here happen to desire that he become as excellent as possible. He is the son of Axiochus, who is the son of the older Alcibiades,
b and he is the cousin of the Alcibiades now living. His name is Cleinias. And he is young. We fear for him, as is likely concerning a youth, that someone might get to him before us and turn his thought to some other practice and corrupt him.[23] So, you two have come at the most beautiful time. But, if it makes no difference to you, undertake to persuade the lad and converse in front of us."

When I said pretty much these very things, Euthydemus spoke both courageously[24] and boldly,
c "But it makes no difference, Socrates, if only the youth is willing to answer."

23 *Diaphtheirein*: to corrupt or spoil. This is the verb used in the accusation against Socrates in the *Apology* (23d and following, especially 24b8-24c1).

24 *Andreiōs*: courageously or manfully. The Greek adjective for courage, *andreios*, is derived from the word for man (*anēr*), as opposed to woman, and therefore more literally means manly, as does the virtue courage (*andreia*) literally mean manliness.

"But in fact," I said, "he is used to this. Often these people here approach him, asking him many things and conversing with him. The result is that he is suitably bold in answering."

As to what came next, Crito, how can I describe it to you beautifully? For it's no small task to recount thoroughly such an extraordinary wisdom. I therefore need to begin my description in the very same way as the poets—invoking the Muses and Memory.[25] d
Euthydemus, then, began from somewhere like this, I believe: "Cleinias, who are the ones who learn among human beings, the wise or the ignorant?"[26]

And the lad, because of the magnitude of the question, blushed and, being at an impasse,[27] looked to me. When I recognized that he had been thrown into confusion, I said, "Be bold, Cleinias, and answer courageously, however it appears to you. For perhaps he e
will benefit you with the greatest benefit."

And at that moment, Dionysodorus leaned over a little with a big smile on his face and whispered in my ear: "Surely, I predict for you, Socrates," he said, "that whatever the lad answers, he will be refuted."

While [Dionysodorus] was in the midst of speaking about this,[28] Cleinias happened to answer, so that I 276a
could not advise the lad to beware, and he answered that the wise are ones who learn.

And Euthydemus said, "Are there some you call teachers, or not?"

He agreed that there were.

25 The personified Memory, Mnemosyne (*Mnēmosunē*), was the mother—and Zeus the father—of the nine Muses. See *Theaetetus* 191d4 and ff.; *Critias* 108d; Homer, *Odyssey* XXIV.60; and Hesiod, *Theogeny* 53-74, 915-917. Poets would often invoke the Muses in order to recount their stories (e.g., Homer, *Odyssey* I.1; see also *Phaedrus* 237a).

26 *Amathēs*: ignorant, literally without learning.

27 *Aporein*: to be at an impasse, in a state of perplexity or confusion, or at a loss. Many of Plato's dialogues end aporetically, meaning without having reached a definitive answer to the investigation at hand.

28 *Metaxu*: elsewhere translated more literally as "in between."

"Is it the case that teachers are teachers of those who learn, just as the citharist and the writing teacher were surely your teachers and those of other children, when you were students?"

He assented.

"But then, at the time you were learning, you did not yet know the things that you were learning?"

"No," he said.

b "Ah, then you were wise, when you did not know these things?"

"Clearly not," he said.

"Isn't it the case that if you were not wise, you were ignorant?"

"Absolutely."

"Ah, then when you were learning what you did not know, you were learning while being ignorant."

The lad nodded.

"Ah, then it's the ignorant who learn, Cleinias, and not the wise, as you think."

And when he said these things, the followers of Dionysodorus and Euthydemus—just as a chorus at the signaling of a director—shouted and laughed at c the same time.[29] And before the lad had recovered his breath nobly and well, Dionysodorus took over: "And what about this, Cleinias," he said, "whenever your writing teacher dictated to you, which of the children learned what he dictated, the wise or the ignorant?"

"The wise," said Cleinias.

"Ah, then the wise learn and not the ignorant, and you did not answer Euthydemus well just now."

d Then, the lovers of these men laughed loudly and made a great clamor,[30] in admiration of the wisdom of these two, while the rest of us were dismayed and silent.

29 The word here translated as director is the same word translated above as teacher (*didaskalos*), which is used for those who direct the chorus in ancient dramas.

30 In the *Apology*, Socrates repeatedly implores the jury not to make a disturbance or clamor (17d, 20e, 21a, 27b, and 30c).

Euthydemus noticed our dismay, and in order that we might be still more amazed, he did not let the lad go, but continued questioning him. Giving his questions a double turn just as good dancers do, he reached the same place as before. He said, "Do the ones learning learn what they know or what they do not know?"

And again Dionysodorus whispered softly to me, e
"Here is another one, Socrates," he said, "just like the first."

"Zeus!" I said, "truly the first round of questions appeared to us beautiful enough."

"Everything we ask, Socrates," he said, "is like this, inescapable."

"So this is why," I said, "you appear to me to be well-reputed among your students."

And at that moment Cleinias answered Euthydemus that those who learn—they are the ones who learn what they do not know. And [Euthydemus] asked him the same kind of questions as before. "What about this," he 277a
said, "do you know your letters?"

"Yes," he said.

"Surely you know them all?"

He agreed.

"And whenever someone dictates something, does he not dictate letters?"

He agreed.

"Isn't it the case," he said, "that he dictates something which you know, if indeed you know them all?"

He also agreed to this.

"Well, then," he said, "so you don't learn what someone dictates; rather, it's the one who doesn't know letters who learns?

"No," he said, "I learn."

"So then you learn what you know," he said, "if, at b
any rate, you know all the letters."

He agreed.

"Then you did not answer correctly," he said.

And just about right when Euthydemus had spoken, Dionysodorus, picking up the argument again just as though it were a ball, took aim at the lad and said, "Euthydemus deceived you, Cleinias. Tell me, is learning not grasping knowledge of what one learns?"

Cleinias agreed.

"And knowing," he said, "is it anything other than having knowledge?"

He assented.

c "Then not knowing is not yet having knowledge?"

He agreed.

"So the ones grasping something, then, are they the ones who have it already or the ones who do not have it?

"The ones who do not."

"And haven't you agreed that the ones who do not know are among those who do not have [something]?"

He nodded.

"Ah, then the learners are among those who grasp and not among those who have?"

He assented.

"Then those who do not know learn, Cleinias," he said, "not the ones who know."

d Euthydemus was still hurrying the lad to his third fall just like in wrestling, when I recognized that the lad was being drowned and wanting to give him a rest lest he play the coward for us, encouraged him saying: "Cleinias, do not be amazed if the arguments should appear unusual to you. You may not perceive what these two strangers are doing to you. For they are doing the same thing that is done in the initiations of the Corybantes,[31] when they make a throne around the one they are about to initiate. For there is some dancing and playing, [as you know] if you have been initiated. And

31 The Corybantes were worshippers of Rhea, the mother of Zeus. The manner in which they worshipped her was similar to the worship of Dionysus, in which the participants were carried away into an orgiastic frenzy. See *Crito* 54d; *Symposium*, 215e; *Ion*, 534a; *Laws*, VII.790d

now these two are doing nothing other than dancing around you and jumping playfully, in order to initiate you after this. Now then, resolve[32] that you're hearing the first of the sophistic rites. e

"For first, as Prodicus says,[33] it's necessary to learn the correct names of things. And in fact, these two strangers are displaying this for you, because you do not see that human beings call it learning when someone from the beginning has no knowledge of a matter and then later grasps it. And they also call it learning when someone already having knowledge uses it to examine the same matter, whether in deed or speech. While this is called understanding more often than learning, it's sometimes called learning too. And, as they are displaying, this escaped your notice, how it is that the same name has been applied to human beings who are opposite, both to the one who knows and to the one who doesn't.[34] 278a

"And there is something like this in the second question too, when they asked you whether human beings learn what they know or what they do not know. In fact these questions belong to the playful side of learning—and it's due to this that I say that they are playing with you. I say it's play for the following reasons. Even if someone should learn many or even all of these sorts of things, he would not know at all the way matters are. Rather, he would be able to play around with human beings, tripping them up and overturning them on account of the difference in meanings of names, b

32 *Nomizein*: resolve. The verb can mean to think or consider, but it is related to the Greek word for law or convention, *nomos*. It has the sense of "to hold something as a rule, law, or custom." It is curious that the word *nomos* never occurs in the *Euthydemus*.

33 The sophist Prodicus is present in *Protagoras* (314c1), and Socrates describes him as divine and all-wise (315e7-316a1), just as he does the sophists in this dialogue. Prodicus made a great deal of money teaching expensive courses (*Greater Hippias*, 282c). He offered a course for fifty drachmas, and he also offered a cheaper course for a single drachma that Socrates claims to have attended (*Cratylus*, 384a8-384c9). On Prodicus, see David D. Corey, "Prodicus: Sophist and Teacher of Socrates," *History of Political Thought* 29, no. 1 (2008): 1-26.

34 See Aristotle, *De Sophisticis Elenchis* 165b23-166b28.

just like the ones who delight and laugh when they pull stools out from under those who are about to sit down,
c when they see them overturned on their backs. So then, resolve that these things that they've done to you are play. Clearly after this, these two will display serious things for you themselves, but I will guide them so that they give me what they promised. For they said that they would exhibit their protreptic wisdom. But now it seems to me that they thought it was necessary first to play with you.

"Now then, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, you have had your play with us, and perhaps this is enough.
d With these things behind us, give an exhibition of turning the lad [to hold] that he should care for wisdom and virtue.

"But first I will display to you two how I would take it up and how I desire to hear it. Then, even if I should seem to you to do it laughably and like an amateur,[35] don't ridicule me. It's because of an eagerness to hear your wisdom that I will undertake to improvise in front
e of you. Restrain yourselves, therefore, both you and your students, and listen without laughing. But you, child of Axiochus, answer me.[36]

35 *Idiotikōs*: privately, not in a public capacity or as a professional, but in the manner of an amateur. The word is derived from the Greek *idios*, private. It is used to describe a person who does something as a layman or amateur rather than one who practices it as a profession. In the *Phaedrus*, for example, Phaedrus claims that as "a private person" or "amateur" he is unable to deliver a speech written by the rhetorician Lysias, who is "the most formidable speechwriter of his day" (228a).

36 Socrates attempts to educate Cleinias twice in the *Euthydemus* with protreptic speeches (here at 278e2-283a4 and later at 288d5-290e1), which interrupt and stand as alternatives to the sophistic displays of wisdom. (See note 1 above.) Aristophanes also breaks up his *Clouds* by having Socrates twice attempt to educate others, although partially offstage (Strepsiades' education, 518-626; Pheidippides' education, 1116-1130).

"Do all we human beings wish to do well?[37] Or is this question of the sort which I was just now fearing would be ridiculous? For surely it's senseless to ask this sort of thing. For who among human beings does not wish to do well?"

"No one at all," Cleinias said.

"Well, then," I said, "Since we wish to do well, how 279a
might we do so? Would we do so if many goods belong to us? Or is this question even more naïve than the other? For surely it's clear that this is so."

He assented.

"Come now, what sort of things of those that exist happen to be good for us? Finding this out[38] doesn't seem difficult for a respectable man, does it? For everyone would tell us that wealth is good, wouldn't they?"

"Very much so," he said.

"Isn't it also the case with being healthy and beautiful b
and adequately provided with bodily things?"

He agreed.

"But it's clear that good birth,[39] power, and honors in one's [city] are also good."

He agreed.

"What else," I said, "remains as good for us? What about being moderate and just and courageous? In the name of Zeus, Cleinias! Do you think that if we were to

37 *Eu prattein*: to do well, or to fare well. The expression commonly means "faring well" or "prospering" (as in our English expression, "I am doing well"). In this sense it is used as a salutation (see *Republic* 621d; *Letters* III 315a-b). But the expression can also mean, more literally, "doing good deeds." Both Plato (e.g., in this section of the *Euthydemus*; *Gorgias* 507c; and *Charmides* 172a), and Aristotle (see, e.g., *NE* 1095a19 and 1098b21-23) exploit this ambiguity. The *eu* in the prefix is commonly used as the adverb for good, as in the expressions "being well-born" or "being well-provided with resources," as Socrates uses below.

38 *Euporein*: to be well provided or have resources, here, in order to answer the question, as opposed to being at an impasse or in perplexity (*aporein*, see note at 275d).

39 *Eugenia*: good birth, the condition of being well-born, with the connotation of belonging to a noble family or class.

include these as goods that we would do so correctly or not? For perhaps someone might dispute with us. How do they seem to you?"

"They're goods," said Cleinias.

c "Well," I said, "and in which chorus shall we station wisdom? Among the goods, or what do you say?"

"Among the goods."

"Consider it well so that we don't leave out some other goods that are also worth speaking of."

"But we don't seem at all to me to be omitting anything," Cleinias said.

And I remembered one and said "By Zeus! We run the risk of leaving out the greatest of goods."

"What's that?" he said.

"Good fortune,[40] Cleinias, which everyone, even the lowest sorts, says is the greatest of goods."

"You speak truly," he said.

And I changed my mind again, and said "You d and I have become a little ridiculous in front of these strangers, child of Axiochus."

"Why is that?" he said.

"Because in including good fortune among [the goods] we spoke about just now, we repeated what we already spoke of."

"What's that?"

"Surely it's ridiculous when something has been before us for a while to set it down again and to say the same thing twice."

"How do you mean?" he said.

"Surely wisdom," I said, "is good fortune; even a child would recognize that." He was amazed, for he is still rather young and naïve. Noticing his amazement, e I said, "Do you not see, Cleinias, that when it comes to

40 *Eutuchia*: good fortune, good luck, prosperity, or success. On *euthuchia*, see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1114a31-14b25; and *Eudemian Ethics* 1246b37-1248b8.

doing well with flute music the flute players are most fortunate?"[41]

He assented.

"Isn't it also the case," I said, "with writing teachers concerning the writing and reading of letters?"

"Very much so."

"And what about this? Surely you don't think, with respect to the risks at sea, that there is someone more fortunate than wise pilots, to speak generally?"

"Not at all."

"And what about this, if you were serving in war, with whom would you more pleasantly share the risk and fortune, with a wise general or with an ignorant one?" 280a

"With a wise one."

"And what about this, with whom would you pleasantly run risks when sick, with a wise doctor or an ignorant one?"

"With a wise one."

"Ah," I said, "then this is because you believe you would be more fortunate if you do it with a wise one than with an ignorant one?"

He conceded.

"So then wisdom everywhere makes human beings fortunate. For surely wisdom would never make some mistake, but necessarily acts correctly and things happen correctly. Or it would no longer be wisdom."

We ended up coming to an agreement, I don't b know how, that, in sum, is this: if wisdom is present, the one for whom it is present has no need of good fortune. When we agreed on this, I inquired of him again about how what we agreed to earlier would hold up. "For we agreed," I said, "if many good things were present for us, we would be happy and do well."

41 The word that we are translating as flute is *aulos*, a flute-like instrument in antiquity. In the *Republic*, Socrates excludes this instrument from his best city in speech (399d-e).

He assented.

"So then would we be happy on account of the presence of good things, if they did not benefit us or if they did benefit us?"

"If they did benefit us," he said.

c "And would they benefit us at all if they were merely there for us, but we did not use them? For example, if we had a lot of food, but we didn't eat it, or drink, but we didn't drink it, would these things benefit us?"

"No, indeed," he said.

"And what about this? If all the craftsmen had all the supplies prepared for their respective works, but they did not use them, would they do well on account of their possession, since they would have acquired all the things necessary for a craftsman to possess? For example, if a carpenter were provided with all the instruments and sufficient wood, but he did not do carpentry, would he benefit from his possession?"

d "In no way at all," he said.

"And what about this, if someone were to have acquired wealth, and all the things which we were just calling goods, but did not use them, would he be happy on account of the possession of these good things?"

"Not at all, Socrates."

"Then," I said, "one must, it seems, not only possess such good things if one is to be happy, but also to make use of them. Otherwise no benefit will come from their possession."

"You speak truly."

e "So then, Cleinias, is this sufficient to make someone happy, both possessing the good things and also using them?"

"It seems so to me, at any rate."

"Both if someone uses them correctly," I said, "and also if not?"

"If correctly."

"You speak beautifully," I said. "For I surely believe that using a matter incorrectly is something else than

leaving it alone. For in the first case, it's bad, and in the second case it's neither good nor bad. Or what do we declare?" 281a

He conceded.

"What about this? In working and using wood, surely nothing other than a knowledge, carpentry, accomplishes correct use?"

"Clearly not," he said.

"But surely also in working with furniture, knowledge accomplishes correct use."

He assented.

"Then also," I said, "concerning the use of the goods that we spoke of first, wealth and health and beauty, with respect to their correct use is it knowledge that guides and keeps our activity correct, or is it something else?" b

"It's knowledge," he said.

"Then knowledge not only offers good fortune to human beings with respect to every possession and action, it seems, but also causes them to do well."

He agreed.

"Well then, in the name of Zeus!" I said, "what benefit would there be from any other possessions without prudence and wisdom? Would a human being be blamed, then, who acquired and did many things without intelligence, or few?[42] Examine this very thing. If one did less, would he not make fewer mistakes, and c making fewer mistakes wouldn't he do less badly, and doing less badly, wouldn't he be less wretched?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"And would someone do less if he were poor or wealthy?"

"Poor," he said.

"And if he's weak or strong?"

42 Diverging from Burnett, we have chosen to follow Iamblichus' omission of the phrase "having intelligence," an omission that is commonly accepted by classicists.

"Weak."

"And honored, or dishonored?"

"Dishonored."

"And would one do less if he were courageous and moderate, or a coward?

"A coward."

"Isn't it also the case for one without work rather than for a workman?"

He conceded.

"And for one who is slow rather than quick, and
d dull of seeing and hearing rather than sharp?"

We agreed with one another about all such things.

"In sum, Cleinias," I said, "in regard to all those things we earlier said to be goods, the argument that they are by nature good in themselves runs the risk of not being so. Rather, this seems to be so: If, on the one hand, ignorance leads them, they are greater evils than their opposites, to the degree that they are more able to serve a bad leader. But, on the other hand, if
e prudence and wisdom lead, they are greater goods. But in themselves none of them is worth anything."

"What you say appears so, it seems."

"What comes about, then, from what we have said? Isn't it that none of the other things is either good or bad, except in the case of these two, wisdom is good and ignorance bad?"[43]

He agreed.

282a "So let's examine," I said, "the part that still remains. Since we are all eager to be happy, and since we appear to become so from using matters and using them correctly, and knowledge offers correctness and good fortune, it is necessary, it seems, for every man to prepare himself in every way to be as wise as possible. Or is it not?"

43 Cf. *Protagoras*: 345d9-345e4. *Gorgias*: 509d7-509e7. *Meno*: 77b-78d. *Timaeus*: 86b-e. *Laws*: V, 731c-d; IX, 860d. *Republic*: I, 336e-336a; VI, 505d-506a. See also Xenophon, *Memorabilia*: III.9.4-6, IV.5.6-12.

"Yes it is," he said.

"And surely if someone thinks that he should obtain this from a father much more than money, and also from his guardians and from other friends as well as those claiming to be his lovers—whether strangers or b
fellow citizens— and he begs and supplicates that they share their wisdom, it is nothing shameful, Cleinias. Nor is it a matter of indignation if he serves and is a slave to a lover or any human being for the sake of this, willing to serve in this sort of beautiful service, eager to become wise. Or does it not seem so to you?" I said.

"Very much so; you seem to me to speak well," he said.

"If, Cleinias," I said, "wisdom is teachable, and c
does not come to human beings spontaneously—for we still have not investigated this, and we, you and I, have not yet agreed to this."

"But to me at any rate, Socrates," he said, "it seems to be teachable."

Being pleased, I said, "You speak beautifully, best of men, and you have done well to release me from a long investigation concerning this very thing, whether wisdom is teachable or not teachable. Now then, since it seems to you teachable, and that it is the only thing among existing things that makes a human being happy and fortunate, what else would you say but that it d
is necessary to philosophize and apply your mind to do this?"

"Very much so, Socrates," he said, "as much as I am able."

And being glad to hear these things, I said, "This is my model, Dionysodorus and Euthydemus, of what I desire protreptic arguments to be, perhaps a bit amateurish and lengthy. But whichever of you wants, exhibit for us by art this same thing. But if you two don't want to do this, exhibit for the lad what follows e
from where I left off, whether it is necessary for him to acquire all knowledge, or whether there is some one knowledge that it is necessary to grasp in order to be happy and a good man, and what it is. For as I was

saying at the beginning, it happens to be a big deal to us that this youth become wise and good."

283a I said these things, Crito; and I was going to pay very close attention, examining how they would take hold of the argument and from what point they would begin to encourage the youth to practice wisdom and virtue. Then the elder of them, Dionysodorus, began the argument first, and we were all looking at him in order to hear at once some amazing speeches. And this was the very thing that came about for us. For the man, b Crito, began with an amazing speech, which is worth your hearing, as the speech was an encouragement to virtue.

"Tell me," Dionysodorus said, "Socrates and also the rest of you who say that you desire that this youth become wise, are you playing when you say these things or do you truly desire them and are you serious?"

And I thought that they believed that we were playing at first, when we were bidding the two of them to converse with the youth, and because of this they c were playing and not being serious. In thinking this, I insisted all the more that we were amazingly serious.

And Dionysodorus said, "Examine it carefully, Socrates, so that you will not deny what you now say."

"I have examined it carefully," I said, "I won't ever come to deny it."

"What about this," he said, "Do you all say that you want him to become wise?"

"Very much so."

"And now," he said, "is Cleinias wise or not?"

"He, at any rate, says that he's not so yet," I said, "and he is no boaster."

d "And you all," he said, "want him to become wise, and not be ignorant?"

We agreed.

"So that which he is not, you all want him to become, and that which he is now, to be no longer?"

And when I heard this I was disturbed. And he seized upon my disturbance and said, "So you want

him to be no longer what he now is, and, it seems, to be dead? Such friends and lovers are worth a lot, who would above all things make their favorite dead."

When Ctesippus heard this he was violently irritated on behalf of his favorite, and said, "Thurian Stranger, if it weren't so savage,[44] I would curse you[45] for lying about me and the others concerning such a matter, which is not holy even to say—that I wish him dead." e

"What," said Euthydemus, "does it seem to you to be possible to lie?"

"By Zeus," he said, "unless I am crazy."

"Is that when one is speaking about the matter which the speech is about, or when one isn't speaking about it?"

"Speaking about it," he said. 284a

"And if one speaks about this, he doesn't speak of anything else of the things that are other than that very thing he is speaking about?"

"How would he not?" said Ctesippus.

"And *that*, about which he speaks, is one of the things that are, apart from the others."

"Very much so."

"So then the one speaking about that," he said, "speaks about what is?"

"Yes."

"But surely he who speaks about what is and about things that are speaks true things. So that Dionysodorus, to the extent that he speaks about things that are, speaks about true things and does not lie about you."

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44 The Greek word, related to farm or field, *agros*, means rustic in the sense of being from the country and therefore lacking social graces or uncivilized, hence savage. In the *Clouds*, Strepsiades identifies himself several times as rustic (43 and ff.) and Socrates calls him rustic as a term of disapproval (645 and ff.).

45 Literally, "I would say 'on your head!'" This is some sort of curse or imprecation, with the implication that Ctesippus would like to see Dionysodorus dead. The head (*kephalē*) was synonymous with life. The English word capital carries similar connotations.

b "Yes," he said. "But the one saying these things, Euthydemus," Ctesippus said, "does not speak about things that are."

And Euthydemus said, "But things that are not, are they not?"

"They are not."

"Is there anywhere where there are things that are not?"

"Nowhere."

"Then could anyone do anything about things that are not that could make them [exist] when they are nowhere?"

"It doesn't seem so to me," Ctesippus said.

"What about this. Whenever the rhetors speak to the people, do they do nothing?"

"No, they do something," he said.

"And if they do something, they also make?"

"Yes."

c "So then speaking is doing and making?"

He agreed.

"So no one speaks about what is not, for then he would make something—and you agreed that no one is able to make what is not. So according to your argument no one lies, and if Dionysodorus speaks, he speaks the true things and the things that are."

"Yes by Zeus, Euthydemus," Ctesippus said, "but he speaks about the things that are in some way in which they are not."[46]

d "What are you saying, Ctesippus?" said Dionysodorus. "Are there some who speak about matters as they are?"

46 *Exein*: literally to hold or to have, but can also be used idiomatically to mean "to be." Ctesippus' remarks could be translated "he speaks about the things that *are* in a way in which they do not *hold*." *Exein* is used extensively in this passage in this manner.

"There are," he said, "the gentlemen[47] and the ones who speak truths."

"What about this," he said. "Is it the case that the good things are in a good way," he said, "and the bad things in a bad way?"

He conceded.

"And you agree that those who are noble and good speak of matters as they are?"

"I agree."

"And those who are good," he said, "speak in a bad way about bad things, if in fact that is how they are."

"By Zeus!" he said, "especially about bad human beings, among whom, if you are persuaded by me, you will beware of being, so that the good do not speak badly of you. Know well that the good speak badly about the e
bad."

"And about the great," Euthydemus said, "do they speak greatly, and hotly about the hot?"

"Very surely," said Ctesippus. "And they speak coldly about the cold and say they converse coldly."[48]

Dionysodorus said, "You are abusive, Ctesippus, abusive."

"By Zeus, I am not, Dionysodorus!" he said, "since I am friendly toward you. But I warn you, just as I would a comrade, and I will try to persuade you never to say so savagely in front of me that I would want those to be 285a
dead whom I hold so dear."

Then, since it seemed to me that they were being rather savage toward each another, I played with Ctesippus and said, "It seems to me, Ctesippus, that we should accept what these strangers say, since they are willing to offer it, and not quarrel over a name. For if they know how to destroy human beings who are worthless and senseless and make them useful and

47 *Kalos k'agathos*. Literally, "the noble and good." See note at 271b. When the sophists continue questioning Ctesippus at 284e, they refer only to those who are good, dropping the noble or the beautiful from the discussion.

48 See Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazusae* 169 ff.

sensible,[49] whether the two of them themselves have
b discovered some such sort of destruction and ruin or learned it from another—so that after destroying someone who is worthless they make a useful one shine forth—if the two know this (and it is clear that they do—for they said that they recently discovered an art that made worthless human beings good), let us concede this to them. Let them destroy the lad for us and let them make him prudent, and all the rest of us as well.

c "But if you young are afraid, let the risk be on me just as on a Carian.[50] And, since I am old, I am ready to run the risk and hand myself over to Dionysodorus just as if he were Medea of Colchis.[51] Let him destroy me, if he wants, or boil me, or let him do whatever he wants. Only let him make me shine forth as useful."

And Ctesippus said, "I also, Socrates, am ready to offer myself to these strangers, even if they want to flay me still more than they are now flaying me, as long as my skin does not end up as wineskin, like that of Marsyas,[52]
d but as virtue. And yet Dionysodorus thinks that I am irritated with him, but I am not. Rather, I contradict what he seems to me to have spoken ignobly against

49 *Emphrōn*: in one's senses, sensible, related to the adjective *phronimos*, prudent, sensible, which Socrates soon uses at 285c.

50 From Liddell and Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*: The Carians would hire themselves out as mercenaries, and were used to spare the lives of the citizen-soldiers; hence to take the risk, not with one's own person, but with *a Carian*. See Herodotus *The History*, I.171.

51 According to myth, Medea of Colchis convinced Pelias' daughters that she could make their father young again by cutting him up and boiling him. She demonstrates this by cutting up an old ram and boiling him, and then producing a young ram that jumps from the pot. Convinced by the trick, Pelias' daughters cut up their father and kill him.

52 Socrates and Ctesippus here imitate Strepsiades from Aristophanes' *Clouds*, 437 ff. There, Strepsiades agrees to be used by Socrates and his associates however they wish. He is even willing to be "flayed," as is Ctesippus here. According to myth, Marsyas the Silenus found an aulos and challenged the god Apollo to a contest with respect to music. Marsyas lost and was subsequently flayed by Apollo. See Herodotus, *The History*: VII.26. Also, compare Plato, *Symposium* 215c, where Alcibiades compares Socrates to Marsyas.

me. But, well-born Dionysodorus," he said, "don't call contradicting abusing. For abusing is something else."

And Dionysodorus said, "Do you make your arguments, Ctesippus, as though contradicting exists?"

"Of course," he said, "and very much so. Or do you, e
Dionysodorus, not believe that contradicting exists?"

"But you couldn't demonstrate," he said, "that you have ever heard anyone contradicting another."

"Are you speaking truly?" [Ctesippus] said. "But, right now, hear me demonstrate for you Ctesippus contradicting Dionysodorus."

"And could you support what you say?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"What about this," he said. "Is there speech for each of the things that are?"[53]

"Absolutely."

"Does the speech for each thing refer to each thing as it is or as it is not?"

"As it is."

"If I remember, Ctesippus," he said, "even just now 286a
we exhibited that no one speaks about anything as it is not. For it appeared that no one speaks what is not."

"And what of it?" Ctesippus said. "Do you and I contradict each other any the less?"

"Would we contradict [each other]," he said, "if we were both giving the speech about the same matter? Or would we therefore be saying the same things?"

He agreed.

"But when neither of us give the speech about the matter," he said, "do we thus contradict each other? Or b
would neither of us recall the matter at all?"

And he conceded this, too.

53 That is, are there things that can be said of each of the things that are? *Logos* here is sometimes translated by others as definition or description.

"Ah, but whenever I say something about some thing, and you say something else about some other thing, do we contradict each other? Or do I speak about the matter, while you say nothing at all [about it]? For how would the one not speaking [about something] contradict the one speaking [about it]?"

And Ctesippus kept silent. Amazed at the speech,
c I said, "What, Dionysodorus, are you saying? For I am always amazed at this speech despite having heard it in fact frequently from many people—for the Protagoreans used it a lot, and earlier ones did so as well. And it always seems to me to be amazing, inasmuch as it overturns not only others but also itself—but I think I will inquire about its truth most beautifully from you. So there is no such thing as speaking falsehoods? Is such an argument possible? Either the one who speaks speaks truly, or he does not speak?"

He conceded.

d "Is it not possible then to speak falsehoods, but possible to have an opinion about them?"

"It's not possible to have an opinion about them."

"Then there is no such thing at all," I said, "as false opinion?"

"There isn't," he said.

"So there is neither ignorance nor ignorant human beings. Or is this not what ignorance would be, if it should exist, speaking falsely about matters?"

"Very much so," he said.

"But there isn't this," I said.

"No," he said.

"Do you say this, Dionysodorus, for the sake of argument, so that you would say something outlandish, or does it truly seem to you that no one is ignorant among human beings?"

e "Refute it," he said.

"And does refuting exist, according to your argument, if no one speaks falsehoods?"

"It doesn't exist," said Euthydemus.

"Wasn't Dionysodorus just now bidding me," I said, "to refute [him]?"

"How could someone bid what is not? Do you bid it?"

"Because, Euthydemus," I said, "I'm not at all understanding these wise and good things; rather I think somewhat slowly. Pardon me if I question tiresomely. Look, if it isn't possible to speak falsehoods, 287a
or to have false opinions, or to be ignorant, is it even possible for someone acting to make a mistake? For is it not possible for the one acting to make a mistake concerning what he does? Is this what you are saying?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then this," I said, "is my tiresome question. If we do not make mistakes either in acting or speaking or thinking, what, in the name of Zeus, have you come here as teachers of, if things are this way? Or were you two not just now saying that you would transmit virtue most beautifully to any human being willing to learn?" b

"So, Socrates," Dionysodorus interrupted, "are you such a Cronos[54] so as to remember now what we said at first? And if I said something last year would you remember it now, when you cannot make use of those things I say at present?"

And I said, "These things are very difficult—as is likely, since they are spoken by the wise. And it is absolutely difficult to make use of this final thing you say. For whatever are you saying, Dionysodorus, when you say that I cannot make use of what you say? Or is it clear that you are saying that I cannot refute it? Then c
tell me, what else does your phrase intend,[55] that 'I cannot make use of your speeches?'"

54 Cronos was a member of the generation of older gods in Greek myth who were deposed by the Olympians. To call someone a Cronos is to call him antiquated, outdated, an old fogy. See, for example, Aristophanes, *Clouds* 929. Euthydemus similarly reproaches Socrates at 295e.

55 *Noein*: to perceive by the mind, to use one's intellect, or, less technically, to intend something. In what follows, Dionysodorus plays on the notion that only souls intend or intellect, i.e., possess intelligence (*nous*).

"But it isn't at all difficult to make use of what you say. Answer [this]."

"Before you answer, Dionysodorus?" I said.

"You won't answer?" he said.

"Is that just?"

"Of course it's just," he said.

"By what argument?" I said. "Or is it clear that it's according to this one, that you have now come to us as someone all-wise in speeches, and you know when it is necessary to answer and when not? And now you won't
d answer anything whatever, because you recognize that it is unnecessary?"

"You prattle on," he said, "neglecting to answer. But, good one, obey me and answer, since even you agree that I am wise."

"I have to obey," I said, "and it is necessary, as it seems, since you rule here. Ask."

"Do those that intend have a soul when they intend, or are they without a soul?"

"They have a soul."

"Do you know any phrase," he said, "that has a soul?"

"No, by Zeus!"

e "Why, then, did you just now ask what my phrase intended?"

"What else," I said, "other than that I made a mistake on account of my stupidity?[56] Or didn't I make a mistake but spoke correctly when I said that phrases intend? Do you say I made a mistake or not? For if I didn't make a mistake, you will not refute me, and although you're wise you will not be able to make use of my argument. Whereas if I did make a mistake, you do not speak correctly when you say that it isn't possible to
288a make a mistake. I'm not speaking about things you were saying last year. The argument seems, Dionysodorus

56 In claiming to be stupid, Socrates is perhaps again ironically playing the role of Strepsiades from the *Clouds* (627 and ff.).

and Euthydemus," I said, "to remain in the same place, falling itself while knocking down others just as of old, and not even your art has discovered how to avoid suffering this, even though it is amazing in its precision with words."

And Ctesippus said, "You say amazing things, men of Thurii or Chios or from wherever and however you b
delight in being named, since you do not care whether you talk nonsense."

And fearing that abuse would occur, I again appeased Ctesippus and said, "Ctesippus, let me say to you the same things I said just now to Cleinias, that you do not recognize that the wisdom of the strangers is amazing. But they are not willing to become serious and exhibit it for us; rather bewitching us they imitate the Egyptian sophist Proteus. So let's imitate Menelaus c
and not release these men until the two reveal to us what they are serious about.[57] For I believe something all-beautiful will come from them, when they begin to be serious. But let us beg and exhort and pray to them to reveal it. Therefore, it seems to me that I should again take the lead [and show them] what sorts of persons I pray they themselves will appear to me. So, from where I left off earlier, I will try to go through what comes next, insofar as I'm able, if I can somehow summon d
them so that they will pity me and commiserate with my efforts, and because I'm being serious the two of them will become serious themselves."

"Cleinias," I said, "remind me where we left off then. I, at any rate, believe that it was here somewhere: We ended agreeing that it is necessary to philosophize. Right?"

"Yes," he said.

57 Menelaus was able to force the sea-god Proteus, a divine son of Poseidon, to answer his questions only by persisting in holding him fast as he took upon himself a variety of shapes, including that of a leopard, a serpent, a boar, and flowing water. After overcoming the god, Menelaus found out from him how to expiate the gods and return home from Troy. Our word, protean, comes from Proteus' name. For the account of Proteus and Menelaus, see Homer, *Odyssey* IV.455 and ff.

"And philosophy is the acquisition of knowledge, or is it not so?" I said.

"Yes, it is," he said.

e "In acquiring what knowledge, then, would we acquire correctly? Or is this simple, that it's whatever will profit us?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"And would it profit us, if, as we went about, we knew how to recognize where in the earth the most gold was buried?"

"Perhaps," he said.

"But earlier," I said, "we refuted this, saying even if all gold came to us without our digging the earth or doing anything, we would have nothing. Just as even if we knew how to make stones into gold, the knowledge
289a would be worth nothing. For if we do not know how to use the gold, no benefit would come from it. Or do you not remember?" I said.

"Absolutely," he said, "I remember."

"Nor does any benefit come from any other knowledge, it seems, not from moneymaking or from medicine or from any other that knows how to make something, but does not know how to use what it makes. Isn't it so?"

He agreed.

"Nor if there were a knowledge that makes us
b immortal, without knowing how to use immortality, does any benefit seem to come from it, if we must infer anything from our former agreements?"

All this seemed so to us.

"We need some sort of knowledge, beautiful boy," I said, "in which making and knowing how to use what is made coincide."

"It appears," he said.

"Then it is far from the case, it seems, that we need to be lyre-makers or to have achieved this
c sort of knowledge. In this case, the art of making is separate from that of using, and thus there is a division

concerning the same thing. For lyre-making and the skill of cithara playing are quite different from one another. Is it not so?"

He assented.

"And it is clear that we have no need of the flute-making art. For this is another of the same sort."

It seemed so to him as well.

"But, in the name of the gods," I said, "if we should learn the art of making speeches, is this the one that we must acquire to be happy?"

"I don't think so," Cleinias said, interrupting.

"What evidence do you use?" I said. d

"I see," he said, "some speech-makers who do not know how to use the speeches they make privately—just as lyre-makers don't know how to use their lyres—while there are others who are able to use what those have worked on, while the speech-makers themselves are unable. It is clear, then, that also concerning speeches the art of making and that of using are separate."

"You seem to me," I said, "to give adequate evidence that this art of making speeches is not the one that one must acquire to be happy. And yet I believed that the knowledge which we have long sought would surely appear from somewhere around here. For to me these e
very men, the speech-makers, whenever I come together with them, Cleinias, seem to be exceedingly wise, and their art divine-sounding and lofty. This isn't amazing, for it's part of the enchanters' art, but slightly inferior to it. The enchanters' art charms vipers and spiders and 290a
scorpions and other beasts and diseases, whereas the art of the speech-maker happens to charm and encourage jurymen and assemblymen and other crowds. Or does it seem to you," I said, "otherwise?"

"No, but it appears to me just as you say," he said.

"Where then should we turn now?" I said, "To what art?"

"I cannot find a way," he said.

"But," I said, "I believe I have discovered it."

"What?" said Cleinias.

b "Generalship seems to me," I said, "to be the art more than any other that one must acquire to be happy."[58]

"It doesn't seem so to me, at any rate."

"How?" I said.

"This art is an art of hunting human beings."

"What then?" I said.

"None of the hunting arts," he said, "involves more than chasing and subduing. And when hunters and fishers subdue their prey, they are unable to use
c it, and surrender it to the cooks. So too geometers and astronomers and logisticians are also hunters; for each of them does not make diagrams, but discovers things that are. Since they do not know how to use them, but only how to hunt, they hand over what they discover to the dialecticians, at least to those who are not entirely mindless."

"Well," I said, "most beautiful and most wise Cleinias, is this how it is?"

"Absolutely. And the generals," he said, "are the same way. When they hunt some city or army, they
d hand them over to political men, for they themselves do not know how to use their prey—just as, I believe, quail hunters hand theirs over to those who raise quail. If, then," he said, "we are in need of that art, which knows how to use what it has acquired, whether by making or hunting, and such is the one that will make us blessed, it is necessary," he said, "to seek something other than generalship."

e **Crito** What are you saying, Socrates? That lad uttered such things?

**Socrates** You don't believe so, Crito?

**Crito** No by Zeus! For I believe that if he said these things he has no need of an education from either Euthydemus or any other human being.

58 *Hē strategikē:* the art of the general, *strategos.* Our word strategy does not have sufficient military emphasis, as we now use strategy to apply to a variety of endeavors.

**Socrates** In the name of Zeus! Could it have been Ctesippus who said this, and I don't remember?

**Crito** What, Ctesippus? 291a

**Socrates** Well I know well that it was neither Euthydemus nor Dionysodorus who said these things. But, daimonic Crito, was there some superior being present who uttered these things? For I know well that I heard them.

**Crito** Yes, by Zeus, Socrates. It seems to me to be by far some superior being.[59] But after this did you all still seek some art? And did you discover what you were seeking, or not?

**Socrates** How, blessed one, could we find it? We were absolutely b
ridiculous. Just like children following crested larks, we kept believing that we were about to grasp each of the knowledges, but they were always escaping. But why should I speak at length? When we came to the kingly art[60] and were examining whether it was the one that offers and accomplishes happiness, right there we fell, as it were, into a labyrinth, and just when we believed we had reached the end, we drove around and appeared to be back at the beginning of the search and equally in c
need as we were at first.

59 Crito's incredulity about the source of the speech in the tale Socrates tells him is reminiscent of that of Phaedrus, in the dialogue bearing his name, concerning the source of Socrates' Egyptian tale about the arts. Just as Crito implies here that Socrates has fabricated what he is relating, Phaedrus explicitly accuses Socrates of making up the tale himself, exclaiming, "Socrates, you easily compose speeches about Egypt or wherever you wish" (*Phaedrus* 275b). In that tale, Thamus, the divine king of Epypt, judges the inventions or discoveries of the god Theuth, for the one who invents something, their "begetter," as Thamus says, is not the best judge of their benefit or harm (*Phaedrus* 274e). Even among the gods, knowing how to make and knowing how to use appear necessarily separate. Cf. Aristotle, *Politics* 1282a17-23.

60 *Hē basilikē technē*: the art of kingship, or the kingly art. Here Plato uses the word art (*technē*), although in other cases he follows Greek usage of referring to such things as generalship, medicine, carpentry, gymnastics, money-making, and rhetoric by using only the feminine form of the adjective (which could be understood to modify art, a feminine noun in Greek). (See, for example, *Euthydemus* 290d, 291e, 294b, and 307c.) Thus he refers to statesmanship with the phrase, *hē politikē* (politics, statesmanship, literally the political [art]), at 292b.

**Crito** How did this come about for you, Socrates?

**Socrates** I'll tell you. For it seemed to us that the political and the kingly arts were the same.

**Crito** Then what?

**Socrates** Generalship and all the rest hand over the works of which they are the craftsmen to this art to rule, as if it alone knows how to use them. And this clearly seemed to us to be the one that we were seeking, and the cause of acting correctly in the city, and it alone seemed to
d us—as the iambic verse of Aeschylus simply says—to sit in the stern of the city, and by piloting and ruling everything to make everything useful.[61]

**Crito** Did it not seem beautifully so to you, Socrates?

**Socrates** You will judge, Crito, if you wish to hear what came about for us after this. For straightaway we examined it again in roughly this way: "Come then, does the kingly art, when it rules all, accomplish for us some work, or
e not?" "Entirely so," we said to each other. Would you not also say this, Crito?

**Crito** I would.

**Socrates** What then would you say its work is? Just as if I would ask you, what work does medicine offer when it rules over everything it rules? Wouldn't you say health?

**Crito** I would.

**Socrates** And what about your art, farming? When it rules over everything which it rules, what work does it accomplish?
292a Wouldn't you say that it offers us food from the earth?

**Crito** I would.

**Socrates** And what about kingship when it rules over everything that it rules? What does it accomplish? Perhaps you can't find a way [to answer]?

**Crito** No by Zeus, Socrates!

**Socrates** Nor could we, Crito. But you do see this, at least, that if this is the art we are searching for, it is necessary that it be a benefit.

**Crito** Absolutely.

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61 See Euripides, *Seven Against Thebes* 1-3.

**Socrates** Then it must hand over something good to us?

**Crito** Necessarily, Socrates.

**Socrates** And we surely agreed with each other, Cleinias and I, that nothing is good other than some knowledge. b

**Crito** Yes, you were saying that.

**Socrates** Isn't it the case that the other works that one might say belong to politics—and these would surely be many, for example, providing wealthy, free, and faction-free citizens—these appeared neither bad nor good. But this art must make us wise and impart knowledge, if it is going to benefit us and make us happy. c

**Crito** These things are so, at least you agreed to them then, as you report the speeches.

**Socrates** So then kingship makes human beings wise and good?

**Crito** What prevents it, Socrates?

**Socrates** But does it make everyone good in every way? And is this the one that hands over every knowledge, shoemaking and carpentry and everything else?

**Crito** I, at any rate, don't believe so, Socrates.

**Socrates** Then what knowledge does it hand over? And how are we to use it? It must be the craftsman of none of the works that are neither bad nor good, and hand over knowledge of nothing other than itself. Shall we say whatever this is, and how we are to make use of it? Do you want us to say, Crito, that it is that by which we will make others good? d

**Crito** Absolutely.

**Socrates** And how will they be good for us and how useful? Shall we still say that they make others so, and these others make others so? And however they are good appears to us nowhere, since we dishonored the works that are said to belong to politics, and the saying, "Corinthian son of Zeus," comes about,[62] for as I was saying, we e

62 The phrase was commonly used to mean a useless repetition. It is thought to have originated when the Corinthian colony of Megara, revolting from Corinth, used it as a taunt to the Corinthian ambassadors when they repeatedly appealed to their supposed sentiment for their mythical founder, Corinthus, son of Zeus.

were in equal or even greater need of seeing what that knowledge is which will make us happy.

**Crito** By Zeus, yes, Socrates! You came, it seems, to a great impasse.

**Socrates** Then I myself, Crito, when I had fallen into this impasse,
293a gave a loud cry, begging both strangers as though they were the Dioscouri,[63] calling upon them to save us, both me and the lad, from the mighty wave of the speech,[64] to become serious in every way and, being serious, to exhibit this knowledge that should we happen upon it we would spend the rest of our lives beautifully.

**Crito** What then? Was Euthydemus willing to exhibit something to you?

**Socrates** How was he not? He began his speech, my comrade, very high-mindedly as follows:

b "Would you rather I teach you this knowledge about which you have been at an impasse for a long time, or exhibit that you have it?"

"Blessed one," I said, "is this possible for you?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Then exhibit that I have it, by Zeus," I said. "For this is much easier than learning for a man of my age."

"Come then," he said, "answer me this. Is there anything that you know?"

"Absolutely," I said, "and many things, at least small ones."

"That's enough," he said. "So does it seem possible to you for anything of those things that happen to be something, for it not to be this?"

c "No, by Zeus, not to me."

"Then," he said, "you know something?"

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63 Literally, "the boys of Zeus," the twins Castor and Polydeuces, often referred to as the Heavenly Twins. The twins saved Helen after she was kidnapped by Theseus and Pirithous. See Homer, *Iliad*: III.230-240 and Euripides, *Helen* 205, 280-285, 1643 and ff.; *Elektra* 310-315, 1060-1065, 1238-1356; and Aristophanes, *Peace* 285.

64 Literally the third wave, which was thought to be the mightiest. See Plato's famous third wave in *Republic* 472a4.

"I do."

"And you are knowing, if you know?"

"Absolutely, at least about what [I know]."

"That doesn't matter. But isn't it necessary for you to know everything, since you are knowing?"

"No by Zeus!" I said, "since there are many things I do not know."

"Then if you do not know something, you are not knowing?"

"About that at any rate, friend," I said.

"Are you then somehow less not knowing?" he said. "Just now you said you were knowing. And so you happen to be the very one who you are and who you are not, with respect to the same things at the same time." d

"Very well, Euthydemus," I said. "for, as the saying goes, everything you say is beautifully said. How then do I know that knowledge which we were searching for? Inasmuch as it is impossible to be and not to be the same thing, if I know one thing, I know everything—for it would not be possible to be knowing and not knowing at the same time. And since I know everything, I in fact also have this knowledge. Is this what you say, and is this your wisdom?"

"You in fact refute yourself, Socrates," he said. e

"What, Euthydemus," I said "have you not suffered this very same thing? I would not be at all upset if I suffered anything whatever along with you and dear Dionysodorus here.[65] Tell me, don't you two know some things but not know others?"

"Least of all, Socrates," said Dionysodorus.

"What are you saying?" I said, "Then you two know nothing?"

"Very many things in fact," he said.

"So since you two know anything whatever," I said, 294a "you know all things?"

65 Socrates uses "dear head," a Greek term of affection.

"All things," he said. "And you know all things too, if you know one thing."

"Zeus!" I said, "you say an amazing thing and a great good has appeared. Do all other human beings know all things as well, or nothing?"

"Surely," he said, "they cannot know some things, and not others, and be both knowing and not knowing at the same time."

"But what then?" I said.

"All," he said, "know everything, if they know one thing."

b "In the name of the gods! Dionysodorus," I said, "it is clear that you two are serious—although it was difficult for me to bid you to be so. Do you two really know everything? For example, carpentry and shoemaking?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"So you two are capable of stitching leather?"

"Yes, and also cobbling, by Zeus," he said.

"And also these sorts of things: are you capable [of saying] how many stars there are and sand?"

"Absolutely," he said. "Don't you believe that we will agree to this as well?"

And Ctesippus interrupted, "In the name of Zeus, Dionysodorus, you two exhibit to me some evidence of
c these things by which I will see that what you two say is true."

"What shall I exhibit?" he said.

"Do you know how many teeth Euthydemus has, and does Euthydemus know how many you have?"[66]

"Does it not suffice for you," he said, "to hear that we know everything?"

"Not at all," he said, "but still tell us only this, you two, and exhibit that what you both were saying is true. And if you both say how many [teeth] each of you has, and you appear to be acquainted with this once we have

66 See Aristophanes, *Plutus* 1055 and ff.

counted, we will be persuaded by you also in all other things."

Supposing that they were being mocked, the two were not willing, but they both agreed that they knew all things, as Ctesippus asked about each thing. Before finishing, there was nothing that Ctesippus held back from asking if they both knew, even shameful things. And these two met his questions most courageously, agreeing that they knew [everything], just as boars come to meet the blows toward which they are pushed. In the end, Crito, I was finally forced as a result of my distrust to ask Euthydemus if Dionysodorus knew even how to dance. "He does, absolutely," he said. d e

"Surely," I said, "you have not come so far into wisdom that at such an age you can tumble over swords and be whirled on a wheel?"

"There is nothing," he said, "[that I don't know]."

"And do you two," I said, "know everything only now, or also always?"

"Always as well," he said.

"And when you two were children and as soon as you came into being you knew everything?"

They both declared so at the same time.

And the matter seemed to us to be incredible. And Euthydemus said, "Do you distrust us, Socrates?" 295a

"Except," I said, "it's likely that you are wise."

"But," he said, "if you would be willing to answer me, I will exhibit that you too agree with these amazing things."

"But," I said, "I would be refuted about this with the greatest pleasure, if I were wise without noticing it. If you exhibit that I know everything always, what greater godsend than this would I discover in my whole life?"

"Answer, then," he said.

"I'll answer. Ask." b

"So then," he said, "Socrates, are you knowing something or not?"

"I am."

"And the thing by means of which you are knowing, do you know by means of this, or by means of something else?"

"By means of that by means of which I am knowing. For I believe you are speaking about the soul. Or are you not speaking of this?"

"Are you not ashamed, Socrates," he said, "that you ask a question in turn when you are being asked a question?"

"Very well," I said. "But what shall I do? I will do whatever you bid me. Whenever I don't know what you ask, do you bid me nevertheless to answer, but not to question in turn?"

c "Surely you conceive something," he said, "about what I say?"

"I do," I said.

"Then answer with a view to what you conceive."

"What then," I said, "if you should ask thinking one thing, but I conceive of another, and then I answer with a view to this, will it be enough for you even though I answer nothing to the purpose?"

"For me, yes," he said, "but it won't for you, I believe."

"Then, by Zeus, I won't answer," I said, "before I inquire."

"You won't answer," he said, "with a view to what you conceive, because you talk nonsense and you are too much of an old fogy."[67]

d And I recognized that he was angry because I made distinctions with respect to what was said, when he wanted to ensnare me by encircling me with names. Then I remembered that Connus also gets angry whenever I do not yield to him, and then he cares less for me on the ground that I am ignorant. Because I was

67 Literally, more ancient than necessary. This accusation echoes the Unjust Speech's accusation of the Just Speech in the *Clouds*, at 915, where he calls the Just Speech an "ancient."

thinking that I would take lessons from [Euthydemus], I believed I should yield, lest he suppose me a dunce and not admit me to his classes. Then I said, "But if it seems to you, Euthydemus, that it should be done this way, e
it must be done. For surely you know how to converse entirely more beautifully than I, inasmuch as I am only an amateur human being in the art. Ask, then, again from the beginning."

"Answer again then," he said, "whether you know what you know by means of something or not?"

"I do," I said, "by means of the soul."

"This [man]," he said, "is again answering more 296a
than what is asked! For I, at least, am not asking you by means of what you know, but whether you know by means of something."

"I did answer more than I needed to," I said, "because of my lack of education. But pardon me. I will now answer simply that I know what I know by means of something."

"Then," he said, "is it by means of this same thing always, or is it sometimes by means of this, and at other times by means of something else?"

"Whenever I know something," I said, "it is always by means of this."

"Again, will you not stop," he said, "adding qualifications?"

"But [I do it] lest this 'always' somehow trip us up."

"Not us, at any rate," he said, "but if anyone, you. b
But answer. Is it always by means of this thing that you know?"

"Always," I said, "since I must take away the 'whenever.'"

"So it's the case that you always know by means of this thing; and inasmuch as you are always knowing, do you know some things by means of this thing by means of which you know, and others by means of another, or all things by means of this thing?"

"By means of this thing," I said, "I know all the things, at any rate, that I know."

"This is that same qualification," he said, "which has come back."

"But I take away," I said, "the 'that I know.'"

"Don't take back one thing," he said. "I don't need
c anything from you. But answer me. Would you be able to know all things, if you did not know everything?"

"It would be a marvel," I said.

And he said, "Add whatever you wish onto this. For you agree that you know all things."

"I seem to know everything," I said, "since the 'that I know' holds no power at all."

"And you have agreed that you always know by means of this thing by which you know, either whenever you know or however you wish [to say it]. You have agreed that you know always as well as all things. It is clear that you also knew when you were a child, and when you were born and when you were growing
d up. And before you were born, and before heaven and the earth came into being, you knew all things, if you always know. And, by Zeus," he said, "you know always and all things, if I wish."[68]

"Wish it so," I said, "most honored Euthydemus, if in fact you really speak truly. But I do not entirely trust that you are sufficient, unless your brother, Dionysodorus here, wishes so with you. Then perhaps it would be. With human beings so marvelous in wisdom, I am unable to dispute when you say that I
e know everything, at least because you say so. But tell me," I said, "how might I say that I know such a thing as this, Euthydemus, that good men are unjust? Come on, tell, do I know this, or do I not know this?"

"Surely you know this," he said.

"What?" I said.

68 The line of argument here recalls—and perhaps parodies—Socrates' so-called theory of recollection, which argues that the soul knows all matters of learning (*ta mathēmata*) "always," although it forgets when it is born and must recollect them (see, e.g., *Meno* 81c and 85d-86a).

"That the good are not unjust."

"Absolutely," I said, "and for a long time. But I am not asking this. But that the good are unjust, where did I learn this?" 297a

"Nowhere," said Dionysodorus.

"Ah, then I do not know this," I said.

"You are spoiling the argument," Euthydemus said to Dionysodorus, "and he will appear not knowing, and he will be knowing and not knowing at the same time." And Dionysodorus blushed.

"But," I said, "what are you saying, Euthydemus? Does your brother, the one who knows all things, not seem to you to speak correctly?" b

"I am a brother of Euthydemus?" Dionysodorus quickly interrupted.

And I said, "Let that go, good one, until Euthydemus teaches me that I know that good men are unjust, and don't begrudge my learning."

"You are fleeing, Socrates," said Dionysodorus, "and are not willing to answer."

"Likely," I said. "For I am weaker than either of you, so that I have a great need to flee you two. Indeed, I am c much inferior to Heracles, who was unable to fight that she-sophist the hydra. On account of her wisdom, when one head of her argument was cut off she threw forth many in the place of the one. Nor was he able to fight the other sophist from the sea, the crab, who it seems to me to have recently sailed in. And when Heracles was pained from its bites and arguments from the left,[69] he called upon his nephew Iolaus for help, who gave him sufficient aid. But if my Iolaus should come, he would d do one thing more than the other."[70]

69 Dionysodorus, of course, sits on Socrates' left (see 271b). The word "left" in Greek has the connotation of sinister.

70 Socrates may mean, as many translators have understood it, that his helper may do more harm than good in the sense that he too would be harmed.

"Answer," said Dionysodorus, "whenever you have done with your chanting. Was Iolaus more the nephew of Heracles than of you?"

"It would be best for me, Dionysodorus," I said, "to answer you. For I well know that you will not give up asking, begrudging and obstructing, so that Euthydemus will not teach me that wisdom."

"Then answer,' he said.

"I answer, then," I said, "that Iolaus was the nephew of Heracles, but not, it seems to me, mine in
e any way whatsoever. For Patrocles, my brother, was not his father, but Heracles' brother Iphicles was similar in name."

"Patrocles," he said, "is your brother?"

"Absolutely," I said, "we are of the same mother, but not of the same father."

"So he is a brother to you and is not a brother to you."

"Not of the same father, at any rate, Excellent one," I said. "For the father of that one was Chaeredemus, and mine Sophroniscus."

"Sophroniscus and Chaeredemus," he said, "were father?"

"Absolutely," I said, "the one mine, and the other that one's."

298a "Is it the case," he said, "that Chaeredemus was other than father?"

"Other than mine," I said.

"Ah, then he was other than father when he was a father? Or are you like a stone?"[71]

"I am afraid," I said, "that I will appear so because of you. But surely I don't seem so to myself."

"Is it the case that you are other than a stone?" he said.

71 Calling someone "a stone" in Greek was a way of calling him stupid, as Strepsiades does to the play's audience, once he has been exposed to Socrates and his disciples, Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1202.

"Surely other."

"Then if you are something other than a stone," he said, "you are not a stone? And if you are other than gold you are not gold?"

"These things are so."

"Isn't it the case also that Chaeredemus," he said, "being other than father would not be a father?"

"It seems," I said, "that he is not father."

"For surely," Euthydemus interrupted, "if b
Chaeredemus were a father, Sophroniscus in turn, being other than father isn't a father, so that you, Socrates, are fatherless."

And Ctesippus took it up: "Hasn't your father," he said, "suffered these same things? Is he other than my father?"

"Far from it," said Euthydemus.

"So he is the same?" he said.

"Surely he is."

"I wouldn't want to agree with that. But, c
Euthydemus, is he only my father, or also that of other human beings?"

"Also of others," he said. Or do you believe that your father isn't father?"

"I was, in fact, believing it," said Ctesippus.

"What then," he said, "can something be gold and not gold? Or human and not human?"

"As the saying goes, Euthydemus," said Ctesippus, "you are not binding flax with flax.[72] You say a formidable thing if your father is the father of all."

"But he is," he said.

"Of human beings?" said Ctesippus, "or also of horses and all the other living things?"

"Of all," he said.

"And is your mother the mother of all?" d

72 The Greek saying means to combine things that are unlike and therefore do not belong together.

"Also the mother of all."

"Ah," he said, "and your mother is the mother of urchins, the ones from the sea."

"And also yours," he said.

"And then you are the brother of gudgeons and puppies and piglets."

"And so are you," he said.

"Then your father is a boar and a dog?"

"And so is yours," he said.

"Immediately," said Dionysodorus, "you will agree to these things, Ctesippus, if you answer me. For tell me, do you have a dog?"

"Surely a worthless one," said Ctesippus.

"Then has he any puppies?"

e "Yes indeed," he said, "others of the same sort."

"Is the dog the father of them?"

"I, at any rate," he said, "saw him mounting the bitch."

"What, then, is the dog not yours?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Is he a father and yours, and therefore the dog becomes your father and you a brother of puppies?"

And Dionysodorus quickly picked right back up, so that Ctesippus would not say something first. "Answer this small matter as well. Do you beat your dog?"

And Ctesippus laughed. "Yes, by the gods," he said, "For I am unable to beat you."

"Then you beat your own father?" he said.[73]

299a "It would be much more just if I were to beat your father, since he engendered such wise sons. But surely,

73 See Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1320-1450. Socrates is there presented as a teacher of father-beating, and his pupil, Pheidippides, beats his father, Strepsiades. Pheidippides subsequently convinces his father of the justice of the act, but Strepsiades can tolerate no more when his son goes on to show that he should beat not only his father, but also his mother.

Euthydemus, this father of both you and the puppies has enjoyed many goods from this wisdom of yours."

"But neither he nor you have need of many goods, Ctesippus."

"Nor you yourself, Euthydemus?" he said.

"Nor anyone else among human beings. For tell me, Ctesippus, whether you resolve that it is good for b
one who is sick to drink a drug, whenever he needs it, or doesn't this seem good to you? Or when one goes to war, should he go having arms rather than without arms?"

"It seems so to me at any rate," he said. "And yet I believe that you will say some one of your beauties."

"You will see this best," he said, "when you answer. Since you agree that it is good for a human being to drink a drug when he needs it, isn't it good to drink as much as possible, and wouldn't it be beautiful if someone rubs and mixes a wagonload of hellebore[74] for him?"

And Ctesippus said, "Absolutely, vehemently so, Euthydemus, if the one drinking is the size of the statue in Delphi."

"Isn't it the case," he said, "also in war, since it is c
good to have arms, one should have as many spears and shields as possible, if it is in fact good?"

"Presumably," said Ctesippus. "But do you not believe, Euthydemus, in one shield and one spear?"

"I do, at any rate."

"And would you arm both Geryon and Briareus this way?[75] I believed you were more formidable than

74 Hellebore was a plant used to cure sickness, especially madness.

75 Geryon was a mythical giant known to have numerous heads and pairs of arms, and perhaps also wings. One of Heracles' twelve labors was to carry off Geryon's cattle. Briareus was one of the hundred-handed giants (*Hekatoncheires*) who were sons of Uranus (Heaven) and Gaia (Earth). Briareus helped Zeus in his attempt to dethrone the Titans. For Geryon, see Aristophanes *Acharnians* 1082; Pindar *Isthmian* I.13; and Hesiod *Theogony* 287-300. For Braireus, see *Iliad* I.400-404; Hesiod *Theogeny* 149, 502, 617; also Apollodorus *Library and Epitome* I.1.1. See also *Laws* 795c.

that, since you are a fighter in armor, and also your comrade here."

While Euthydemus fell silent, Dionysodorus
d returned to Ctesippus' earlier answers: "Doesn't it also seem to be good to you," he said, "to have gold?"

"Absolutely, and a great deal of it," said Ctesippus.

"What then, does it not seem to be useful to you to have good things always and everywhere?"

"Very much so," he said.

"And don't you agree that gold is good?"

"I have agreed so," he said.

"Then isn't it always necessary to have it everywhere
e and most of all in oneself? And one would be most happy if he should have three talents of gold in his belly, and a talent in his skull, and a stater of gold in each of his eyes?"

"They say, Euthydemus," Ctesippus said, "that the Scythians are the most happy and best men, who have a great deal of gold in their skulls—[to speak] like you were just now speaking about the dog being my father—and what is still more amazing, that they also drink from their own skulls that have been made gold, and they look down inside them, holding the top of the head in their hands."[76]

300a "Do the Scythians," said Euthydemus, "and the other human beings see things with respect to which seeing is possible, or impossible?"[77]

"Surely the things with respect to which it is possible."

"Is it so also with you?" he said.

"And also with me."

"Then do you see our cloaks?"

"Yes."

76 According to Herodotus, the Scythians would drink from the skulls of their enemies, cut just above the eyebrows, and the rich Scythians would drink from gilded skulls. See *The History* IV.65.

77 "With respect to which seeing is possible" translates an expression in Greek that could mean either "able to be seen" or "able to see."

"Then seeing is possible with respect to these things?"

"Exceedingly so," said Ctesippus.

"Then, what?" he said.

"Nothing. Perhaps you don't believe seeing is possible with respect to them? You are so pleasant. But you seem to me, Euthydemus, to have fallen asleep without lying down, and if it's possible to be speaking and to speak nothing, you are also doing this."

"Can there be speaking," said Dionysodorus, "for b
what is silent?"[78]

"In no way whatsoever," said Ctesippus.

"Nor, then, can there be silence for what speaks?"

"Still less," he said.

"Whenever, therefore, you speak of stones and wood and iron, is there not speech for what is silent?"

"Not, at any rate," he said, "if I pass by the coppersmith's, where the irons utter and scream loudly, it is said, when they are touched. Thus, because of your wisdom, you are saying nothing without noticing it. But still exhibit the other thing for me, how in turn there can be silence for what speaks."

And Ctesippus seemed to me to be super-agitated c
on account of his favorite.

"Whenever you are silent," said Euthydemus, "is there not silence for all things?"

"There is," he said.

"Is there silence for what speaks if they are among everything."

"What then?" said Ctesippus, "all things are not silent?"

78 Depending on whether one understands the noun as the subject or object of the infinitive, Dionysodorus' question can be translated as "can one who is silent speak?" or "can one speak about what is silent?" Similarly below, Dionysodorus asks either "Can one who is speaking be silent?" or "can one be silent about what speaks?" Our translations, "speech for what is silent," and "silence for what speaks" are an attempt to capture the ambiguity in the Greek.

"Surely not," said Euthydemus.

"Ah, but then, Excellent one, all things speak?"

"At least those that speak."

"But," he said, "I am not asking this, but are all things silent or do they speak?"

d "Neither and both," said Dionysodorus snatching it up. "For I know well that you will have no use for this answer."

And Ctesippus, as was his custom, roared loudly. "Euthydemus," he said, "your brother has admitted both sides of the argument, ruining and defeating it." And Cleinias was greatly pleased and laughed, with the result that Ctesippus grew ten times himself. And it seems to me that Ctesippus, rogue that he is,[79] had picked up these things from these [sophists] themselves, for there is no such wisdom nowadays among any other human beings.

e And I said, "Why are you laughing, Cleinias, about matters so serious and beautiful?"

"Did you ever before behold, Socrates, a beautiful matter?" said Dionysodorus.

"I did," I said, "and many, Dionysodorus."

301a "Then were these other than the beautiful, or the same as the beautiful?"

And I came to be at an impasse from every side, and supposed that I suffered justly because of my grumbling; nevertheless I said they were other than the beautiful itself, though there is some beauty present to each of them.

"If then," he said, "a cow comes to be present to you, you are a cow, and because I am now present to you, you are Dionysodorus?"[80]

79 *Panourgos*: a rogue, scoundrel, villain. The word means, literally, one who does everything, i.e., who has no shame or restraint.

80 Just as in the earlier discussion in the *Euthydemus* of the soul's knowing all things always (see note at 296d), Plato here presents a reference to or a parody of Plato's so-called theory of the forms (or the ideas). See, for example, *Republic* 510b-519c, *Phaedo* 100c-d, and *Parmenides* 129a-135c.

"Hush!" I said.[81]

"But how could the one," he said, "be other than the other, when this other is present to it?"[82]

"Ah," I said, "are you at an impasse with respect b
to this?" I was already trying to imitate the wisdom of these two men, out of a desire for it.

"How am I not at an impasse?" he said, "both I and all other human beings, with what is not?"

"What are you saying, Dionysodorus?" I said, "Is the beautiful not beautiful and the shameful not shameful?"

"If it seems so to me," he said.

"Doesn't it seem so?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Isn't it also the case that the same is the same and the other is the other? For surely the other, at any rate, isn't the same, but I believe that not even a child would be at an impasse about this, that the other is other. But, c
Dionysodorus, you let this drop willingly, whereas in other ways you seem to me to have accomplished the work of conversation all-beautifully—like craftsmen who accomplish the works that are fitting to them."

"Do you know, then," he said, "what is fitting for each of the craftsmen? First, with respect to whom is it fitting to forge copper, do you know it?"

"I do. That's a coppersmith."

"And what about this, making pots?"

"A potter."

"And what about this, to slaughter and skin and to boil and roast little slivers of meat?"

"A cook," I said.

81 *Euphēmein*: to speak piously, literally to speak well. The word carries religious overtones; its opposite, *blaspēhmeō*, literally to say something harmful, means to blaspheme. When used in the imperative, as Socrates does here, it is often translated as "Heaven Forbid."

82 Dionysodorus appears to ask how could the one [i.e., a beautiful matter] be other than the other [i.e., the beautiful], when this other is present to it?

d If someone does fitting things," he said, "he does them correctly?"

"Very much so."

"And, you say, it is fitting, with respect to the cook, to cut-up and to skin? You agreed to these things or not?"

"I did agree," I said, "but pardon me."[83]

"Surely it's clear," he said, "that if someone, having slaughtered the cook and cut him up, were to boil and roast him, he would do fitting things. And if someone forges the coppersmith himself and pots the potter, thus also will he do fitting things."

e "Poseidon!" I said, "now you are putting the finishing touch on your wisdom. Could I ever come close enough to it that it becomes mine?"[84]

"Would you recognize it, Socrates," he said, "if it became your own?"

"If you wished," I said, "it's clear that I would."

"What, then," he said, "do you believe that you recognize your own?"[85]

"Unless you say something else, for you must be my beginning, and Euthydemus there must be my end."[86]

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83 Socrates asks pardon when he hears the ambiguity in the statement to which Dionysodorus obtained his agreement: If is it fitting with respect to the cook to cut up and skin, then it could mean either that it is fitting for the cook to cut up and skin or that it is fitting to cut up and skin the cook. In Greek, because the subjects of infinitives occur in the accusative case, the two statements are identical.

84 *Oikeion* means literally what belongs to one's household (*oikos*), and hence what is one's kindred, or one's own.

85 *Gignōskein*, which we have been translating as recognize, is the verb of knowing used on the inscription on the temple at Delphi, the famous command to "know yourself" (*gnōthi sauton*) (see *Charmides* 164e). The sophist echoes that inscription when he asks Socrates whether he believes that he "recognizes [or knows] [his] own" (*ta sautou ...gignōskein*).

86 Socrates uses an expression used of the gods, whose power is acknowledged if they are one's beginning and one's end (see *Iliad* 9, 97). Socrates, however, may be suggesting a crack in the sophistic armor, if one of them is the beginning and the other the end, that is, neither the one nor the other, nor even both together serve in this capacity, but only separately.

"So, then," he said, "do you suppose to be yours what you rule and can use however you wish? For example, 302a
a cow or a sheep, would you suppose that those things are yours that you can sell or give away or sacrifice to whichever of the gods you wish? And if it weren't so, they wouldn't be yours?"

I knew that something beautiful was going to emerge from the questions, and I wanted to hear it as quickly as possible. So I said, "It is absolutely so. Such things alone are mine."

"What then?" he said, "do you not call those things living that have a soul?"

"Yes," I said.

"Do you agree, then, that those living things alone b
are yours, to which it is possible for you to do all these things that I was just now saying?"

"I agree."

After pausing very ironically as though he were examining something huge, he said, "Tell me, Socrates, do you have an ancestral Zeus?"

Suspecting that the argument would come to the very end that it did, I twisted as if caught in a net to escape an impassable turn. "I do not, Dionysodorus," I said.

"Then you are a miserable human being, and no c
Athenian, if you have no ancestral gods nor holy things nor anything else either beautiful or good."

"Hush, Dionysodorus, let it go," I said, "and don't educate me prematurely and harshly. For I have altars and household and paternal shrines as do other Athenians."

"Then," he said, "other Athenians have no ancestral Zeus?"

"The Ionians," I said, "do not use this name, nor those who emigrated from this city nor do we, but there

d is an ancestral Apollo, because of the birth of Ion.[87] We do not call Zeus ancestral, but household and tribal. Athena is also tribal."

"But this suffices," said Dionysodorus. "For you have, it seems, Apollo and Zeus and Athena."

"Absolutely," I said.

"Then these would be your gods?" he said.

"My progenitors," I said, "and masters."

"But they are yours, at any rate," he said. "Or have you not agreed that they are yours?"

"I have agreed." I said, "What do I suffer as a result?"

"Then are these gods," he said, "also living beings? For you have agreed that whatever has a soul is a living
e being. Do these gods not have a soul?"

"They do," I said.

"Then they are living beings?"

"Living beings," I said.

"And among the living beings," he said, "you have agreed that those are yours that you are able to give and sell and sacrifice, in fact, to whichever god you want."

"I have agreed," I said. "There is no retreat for me, Euthydemus."[88]

"Come on then, tell me straightaway," he said, "since you agree that Zeus and the other gods are yours, then is it possible for you to sell them or give them away
303a or use them in whatever way you wish just as with the other living beings?"

Crito, it was as if I were knocked over by the speech and rendered mute. And Ctesippus came to my aid, "Bravo, Heracles!" he said, "for your beautiful speech."

87 See Euripides' *Ion*. According to myth, Ion was the child of Creusa and Apollo. Ion subsequently founded the Ionian race, to which the Athenians belonged.

88 Socrates now directs his response to Euthydemus, although he had been speaking to Dionysodorus (see 302b).

And Dionysodorus said, "Is Heracles the bravo or is the bravo Heracles?"

And Ctesippus said, "Poseidon, what formidable speeches. I give up; you two men are unbeatable."[89]

Then everyone present, dear Crito, gave abundant b
praise to the speech and the two men, until they almost died from laughing and clapping and rejoicing. In each of all the earlier [rounds] only the lovers of Euthydemus clamored beautifully, but now the pillars in the Lyceum almost made a clamor and took pleasure in these two men. And I myself was put in such a state as to agree c
that I never beheld human beings so wise, and enslaved in all ways by their wisdom I turned to praise and to extol them. And I said, "O Blessed ones of an amazing nature, who have worked out such a matter so quickly and in so little time! Of all the beautiful things in your speeches, Euthydemus and Dionysodorus, the most magnificent is that you have no care for the majority of human beings, nor for the respectable and reputable, but only for those similar to yourselves. For I well know d
that there are very few human beings like you who would appreciate these speeches, while the rest are so ignorant of them that I well know that they would be more ashamed of refuting others with these speeches than of being refuted themselves.

"On the other hand, there is something populist[90] and gentle in your speeches: When you say that there is nothing beautiful, or good, or white, or other such things, and that nothing is other than anything else, you really artlessly stitch up the mouths of human e
beings, as you yourselves say. But because you do this not only to those of others, but seem to do it to your own as well, it is quite graceful, and as a result removes the offense from your speeches.

"But indeed the greatest thing is that these things that you have so artfully discovered are such that any human being could learn them in a short time. I, at any

89 *Amachos*: unbeatable, literally, without battle or unable to fight. See 271c, where the two are described as ready for every battle or fight (*pammachos*).

90 *Demotic*: literally, related to the *demos* or the people.

rate, recognized when paying attention to Ctesippus, how quickly he was able to imitate you on the spot. Now
304a then, it's a beautiful matter that your wisdom can be handed over quickly, but it's not suitable for conversation in front of human beings. If you are persuaded by me, you will take care not to speak in front of the many, so that they don't learn this from you quickly and know no gratitude. But most of all, converse, you two, only with yourselves. And if not, if it is in front of another,
b do it only before one who gives you silver. And if you are moderate, you will counsel your students these same things, never to converse with just any human being but either with you or with one another. For a rare thing, Euthydemus, is an honored one, but water is cheapest, being the best, as Pindar said. But come on, you two," I said, "admit both me and Cleinias here [as pupils]."[91]

After we conversed about these and other brief matters, Crito, we departed. Examine, then, how you might accompany me to these two men, since they both
c said they were able to teach anyone who is willing to pay, and that neither age nor nature prevents anyone from readily receiving their wisdom—and what is most fitting for you to hear, they say it does not prevent making money.

Crito Surely, Socrates, I am a lover of hearing and learn anything with pleasure. However, I am in danger of being unlike Euthydemus, and rather like those about
d whom you were speaking, who take more pleasure in being refuted than in refuting with such arguments. It seems to be laughable for me to warn you, but nevertheless, I am willing to tell you what I heard. You should know that one of those leaving your [discussion] came up to me as I was taking a walk. He is a man who believes himself very wise, and is among those who are

91 Socrates ends his conversation with Euthydemus and Dionysodorus with words of caution or a warning of sorts. Similarly in the *Clouds*, the fact that Strepsiades burns down Socrates' thinkery could be viewed as a warning from Aristophanes to Socrates against readily admitting students or being too public in his affairs. Strepsiades, for his part, is not put through rigorous testing prior to admittance to the thinkery, and neither is Ctesippus here.

formidable with respect to speeches in courtrooms. "Crito, don't you listen to these wise ones?" he said.

"No, by Zeus!" I said, "for though I stood near I was unable to hear because of the crowd."

"Indeed," he said, "it was worth hearing."

"Why's that?" I said.

"Because you would have heard men conversing e
who are now the wisest concerning these sorts of speeches."

And I said, "What did they reveal to you?"

"Nothing else," he said, "than the very things always heard from those babbling nonsense and treating with unworthy seriousness what is worth nothing." (For he spoke with expressions somewhat like this.)

"But surely," I said, "philosophy is some graceful matter."

"In what way," he said, "is it graceful, blessed one? For it's not worth anything. But if you had come near just 305a
now, I believe you would have been completely ashamed on behalf of your comrade. He was so outlandish as to be willing to offer himself to these human beings who don't care what they say and cling to every word that is uttered. And these, just as I was now saying, are among the best nowadays. But, Crito," he said, "the matter itself and the human beings who spend their time in it are the lowest sort and ridiculous."

But to me, Socrates, it seemed that he was not correct in blaming this matter, nor is anyone else who blames it. However, he seemed to me to censure b
correctly anyone willing to converse with these sorts in front of many human beings.

**Socrates** Crito, men of this sort are amazing. But I do not know yet what I am going to say. What sort was the one who came up to you and censured philosophy? Was he one of those formidable in contesting in courtrooms, some rhetor, or was he one of those who send the rhetors into

[courtrooms], a composer[92] of speeches with which the rhetors contest?

c **Crito** Least of all, by Zeus, a rhetor, nor do I believe he has ever gone up into a courtroom. But they say he is praised concerning the matter, by Zeus, and is formidable, and puts together formidable speeches.

**Socrates** Now I learn whom you mean. And I myself was just now about to speak about them. For these are the ones, Crito, who Prodicus says are on the border between the philosophic man and the political one. They believe they are the wisest of human beings, and in addition to this they also believe that they seem completely
d [wise] to the many. Consequently, no one stands in their way of being well-reputed above everyone more than the human beings concerned with philosophy. They therefore suppose that if they can set them down in reputation so they seem to be worth nothing, then incontestably, immediately, and in the eyes of all, they will bear the victory prizes in a reputation for wisdom. For they suppose that they are in truth most wise, but, whenever they fall short in speeches in private, they suppose that they are cut off by those [who hang] around Euthydemus. And they believe they are completely wise, as is likely. And it's a likely argument [because] they have a measure of philosophy and a measure of politics.
e And they share in both as needed, and without risks and contests, they bear the fruits of their wisdom.

**Crito** What's that? Do they seem to you, Socrates, to be saying something? For surely the argument of these men has some seemliness.

**Socrates** It has in fact some seemliness, Crito, rather than truth. For it is not easy to persuade them that when human
306a beings—and all other things—who are between two things and share in both, one of them being bad and the other good, they come to be better than the one and worse than the other. But when they are constituted out of two that are good in different ways, they are inferior to each of them in the regard to which each

92 Literally, a poet (*poiētēs*) of speeches.

is useful. Only when they are constituted from and in the middle of two that are bad in different ways, are they better than each of those things in which they share. If then philosophy and political practice are good, but in different ways, those sharing in both and in the middle of them, say nothing [when they claim their superiority], for they are inferior to both. But if one is good and the other bad, they are worse than the former and better than the latter. Only if both were bad, would they say anything true, and in no other case. But I do not believe that they would agree either that both are bad or that the one is bad and the other is good. Nevertheless, sharing in politics and philosophy, they are really worse than each with respect to what is worth speaking of about each, while being third with respect to truth they seek to appear to be the first. Although we should believe that they are such as they are, we should nevertheless pardon them for their desire and not be harsh with them. For we should appreciate every man who says something prudently and who goes forward laboring courageously. b c d

**Crito** Indeed, Socrates, as I always tell you, I am at an impasse about my sons as to how I should treat them. While the younger one is still small, Critoboulos is of such an age now as to need someone to assist him. And whenever I come to be with you, I become disposed to think it madness that I have been so serious about my children in many ways—concerning marriage, how they will be of good birth from their mother's side, and concerning money, how they will be as wealthy as possible—but that I have been careless concerning their education. And whenever I look upon someone who says he educates human beings, I am dismayed and it seems to me that each of them, when I examine them, is utterly weird—to speak the truth to you. The result is that I am not able to turn the lad to philosophy. e 307a

**Socrates** Dear Crito, do you not know that in every pursuit the many are inferior and worth nothing, and the serious are few and worth everything? Does gymnastics not seem to you to be beautiful, and also money-making and rhetoric and generalship?

**Crito** Entirely so, to me.

**Socrates** What then? In each of these things, do you not see that
b the many are ridiculous in their work?

**Crito** Yes, by Zeus! What you say is very true.

**Socrates** So because of this you will flee all pursuits and not turn your son toward them?

**Crito** It wouldn't be just, Socrates.

**Socrates** Then don't do what it isn't necessary, Crito, but bid those who pursue philosophy good-bye, be they useful or useless, and when you have put the matter to the
c test yourself beautifully and well, if it appears to be something inferior to you, turn away all men from it, not only your sons. But if it appears as I myself believe it to be, take heart, and pursue and practice it—as the saying goes, both yourself and your children.